



Department of Health and Human Services
Behavioral Health Division

Milwaukee County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 13, 2017

Media Contact:

Katy Glodosky

Katy.glodosky@milwaukeecountywi.gov

920-627-2619

Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division Campaign Challenges Candidates to Remember Why They Became Nurses

Current nurses share their “why” and provide a behind the scenes look at mental health nursing

Milwaukee, WI (February 13, 2017) — The Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division (BHD) today launched an unprecedented recruitment campaign for mental health nurses. In the face of local and national nursing shortages, and more significant shortages in mental health care, BHD’s campaign challenges candidates to apply only if they have what it takes to care for the most underserved populations.

“This is a bold and exciting step for the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division,” says BHD’s Administrator Mike Lappen. “As healthcare recognizes the importance of mental illness in a person’s overall health, mental health nursing is becoming increasingly important. There is no better place to get experience in mental health nursing than at BHD.”

Nurses at BHD work with some of the most complex cases in Milwaukee County because BHD accepts patients with severity levels that other local healthcare institutions cannot. Additionally, they learn to care for the whole person - managing their physical illnesses like heart disease or diabetes, while treating behavioral illnesses like schizophrenia or addiction. They work closely with clinical teams including social workers, occupational therapists and psychiatrists. These experiences provide exposure to practices nurses will draw from their entire careers.

The new recruitment campaign profiles BHD nurses who share their reasons for entering the field of mental health nursing and why a career at BHD is so rewarding. The campaign features billboards, bus and radio ads across Southeast Wisconsin that will run from February through April. These ads challenge prospects to visit the County’s website where they’ll find videos of BHD nurses sharing their stories, job postings and information to help them find out if they have what it takes to be a mental health nurse at BHD.

“BHD is transforming the way we prevent, treat and assist our community with recovery from illnesses,” says Linda Oczus, Chief Nursing Officer at the Behavioral Health Division. “Our nurses work with purpose, drive and compassion, and we want to be sure we are taking active steps to recruit individuals who share our values and want to practice nursing at the highest level.”

Nurses who are hired will benefit from a number of incentives: \$5,000 sign-on bonus for full-time RNs, GNs, Emergency Service Clinicians and Emergency Service Clinicians-RN (\$2,500 for part-time); federal

loan forgiveness eligibility; school loan payback of up to \$10,000 for full-time, hospital-based RNs (\$5,000 for part-time); a flexible benefits package with medical, dental, vision and more; and other County Employee benefits.

In addition to the ad campaign, the Behavioral Health Division is training nurses to speak at area colleges about mental health nursing. BHD will also host a job fair on Thursday, March 23 from 1 - 4 p.m. for interested candidates to hear first-hand accounts from BHD nurses and learn more about what it takes to be a nurse at BHD. More information on job openings and the job fair can be found at <http://county.milwaukee.gov/nursing>.

For more information or to schedule an interview with a BHD nurse, contact Katy Glodosky at 920-627-2619 or katy.glodosky@milwaukeecountywi.gov.



“If you truly feel like you want to make a difference in the life of another person and you truly want to dedicate yourself to the community and the people around you, this is the place you can do that,” says Vie Lucas, RN, Psychiatric Crisis Services, Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division.

About the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division

The Behavioral Health Division provides care and treatment to adults, children, and adolescents with mental illness, substance use disorders, and intellectual disabilities through both County-operated programs and contracts with community agencies. Services include intensive short-term treatment through our crisis services and inpatient services, as well as a full array of supportive community services for persons with serious mental illness and substance use disorders. Long-term inpatient care is provided through the Division's nursing home programs.

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